

THE BEARINGS OF COLLEGE EDUCATION UPON THE WELFARE OF THE WHOLE
COMMUNITY.

THE
BACCALAUREATE

IN

MIAMI UNIVERSITY,

DELIVERED, AUGUST 10TH, A. D. 1843.

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Oxford, Ohio.

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To the members of the Eighteenth Graduating Class of Miami University, the following address is most respectfully dedicated by their friend and humble servant

THE AUTHOR.

THE EIGHTEENTH CLASS OF GRADUATES.

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L. W. Chalfant,	Clermont co. O.
J. R. Clarke,	Maysville, Ky.
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BACCALAUREATE.

GENTLEMEN OF THE BOARD:---

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS.—Opinions, adopted without reason, are scarcely removeable by reason. The simple fact of a man's having imbibed an opinion, it matters not how or whence derived, creates in his mind a feeling of interest in its favor. Self-love prompts him to cherish and defend it; simply because he happens to have fallen upon it. The moment you touch it with a hostile hand, the shield of his protection is thrown over it; his sympathies flow around it; and, though he may have been upon the point of abandoning it at the instant of your attack, he now stands forth its champion. Prejudice, which had been just expiring, now rallies back into life; her waning energies are stimulated to action and she nerves herself for the combat.

Such cases—and they are interminably numerous—serve to illustrate the abuse of a most deeply seated and important principle of our nature:—we mean *self-love*. The line of distinction between this and selfishness, it is important to perceive. Self-love is love to self under the dominion of reason, which always prompts to promote my own happiness upon the whole; and which therefore is often obliged to deny present gratification for the sake of future and greater and more general good. Selfishness, on the contrary, seizes upon pleasures without regard to their remote effects, upon ourselves, or their bearings upon the rights and happiness of others. In other words, self-love, without the governing influence of reason, becomes selfishness.

If this distinction be correct, then we see how a man exposes himself to the danger of selfishness, who inconsiderately and rashly takes up any opinion. There may be little, perhaps no selfishness in the first step. It may be a matter of mere indifference to him—a case in which he had no feeling of interest. He took up the opinion, as he plucked a sprig from the shrub by which he passed, without any reflection; but now he has it: it is his: and if it be er-

roneous he may be led to defend it against reason. Whereas, had he reasoned first, before adopting, he would have rejected it.

If these things be so, we see farther, how important mere *manner* is, in the business of opposing erroneous sentiments: and how much truth may loose from the absense of the *suaviter in modo*. The mind of man is naturally adapted to the perception and love of truth; and this natural adaptation is not wholly abrogated by his depravity. Truth is still the food of the rational mind, by the use of which only, its powers are sustained and perfected. If its opposite be entrenched behind prejudice, and we attempt to dislodge the error that we may enthrone truth, we must proceed cautiously. If we can reach the citidel of the understanding, without alarming the hissing sentinel of prejudice, the fortress is ours; for an enlightened judgment will necessarily decide in favor of truth. No man can believe what he *perceives* to be false. But if our approach be rude and boisterous—if unnecessary harshness awake up the snaky brood of prejudice—if we send quivering through his nerves, a thousand violent emotions, the eye sees nothing, the ear hears nothing but these hydra shapes; the mind perceives not the truth: all the avenues of its approach are closed; and, of course, reason has not that material to work upon, which is indispensable to her healthful operation.

Something like this, we suppose, occurs in the popular mind and its opinions relative to college learning. Many people, of sound natural judgment and good feeling toward their neighbors and the country at large, have imbibed a kind of indistinct and indefinable opinion, that the higher grades of literature and science, are little, if at all advantageous to the great mass of the people. What good do Greek and Latin and Mathematics and Philosophy and Logic and Political Economy to us? Are we enriched by them? Are our enjoyments promoted? Do they enlarge our privileges? Do they make us wiser and better? Those young men who go to College, we admit, are benefited; they acquire such knowledge as enables them to make a living and they ofte arisen to affluence and luxury, by taxing the labor of the farmer and mechanic in the shape of professional wages. But where do we, the great majority, lay up our profits? How are we made more happy? The Presidents and Professors, indeed, have fine fat salaries and easy lives of it;

but we should like to be informed, how College learning benefits the laboring man, the farmer, the mechanic—the bone and sinew of the nation.

Let me not be guilty, Fellow Citizens, of the imprudence which I have already censured. I may be mistaken. But if so, pardon me for taking up the opinion without reason. On the other hand if there be no mistake here— if such opinions as I have alluded to, have existed and do exist—and especially, if sometimes they have entrenched themselves behind prejudices and resulted in unkind feelings towards those public drudges, the professional teachers of our land, is it not reasonable and seasonable now to notice them? May it not be, that the ploughman, who, oppressed with the glare of light, with heat and dust, murmurs at the hardships of his case and envies the cool shade, the mild lamp light and moist atmosphere in which the miner labors far beneath his feet, misjudges the case for want of accurate knowledge of his neighbors' hardships? Does he know how many hours per day the miner labours? Does he feel his pains and endure his privations?

May it not be, that the rank and file soldier, who looks with unkind glance at the splendid marque, the gilded epaulette, and glittering sword of his commander, may be unacquainted with the crushing load of his responsibilities, his sleepless nights and perilous days? Has that dissatisfied soldier duly bethought himself of such questions as these? If this army shall be cut to pieces and routed in disgrace, on whose fame will the dishonor forever lie? If to-morrow shall purchase victory and glory at the price of confused noise and garments rolled in blood, what garments so likely to be thus rolled, as the gilded regimentals? If the plains of Abraham are to witness a deathless victory, whose blood so likely to seal it as Wolfe's? If the victor's shout must be preceeded by the fall of many a lofty head, whose so likely to fall as that over which nods the brilliant plume? The Turk looks with evil eye upon the splendours of the Pasha's tent, has he thoughtfully asked himself—if the sword of Bozzaris must drink Moslem blood, whose so likely as his who slumbers beneath the gilded canopy? Could a Greek soldier be supposed to envy his chief must he not have forgotten to ask himself--if the scymitar must be sheathed in the bosom of her noblest sons, before Greece can be free, who more likely to be its victim than the leader of the Sulliot band?

No my friends, you mistake the case quite, if you suppose that the leaders of the educational corps, gain their rewards without labor, their victories without battle. May you not be unacquainted with their health-impairing toils? Are you certainly familiar with that spirit-exhausting study which is a weariness to the flesh? Are you quite certain, that they are gentlemen of leisure, who have two or three hours of light labor, and all the other twenty-one for sleep and pleasure? Is it perfectly obvious to you, that professional teachers live luxuriously and fatten at the public crib? Where—let me ask you, once and again for all—where rest the weary limbs of the venerable Ex-President of Ohio University—a State Institution? Has he made his fortune and retired “to his country seat.” Fattened upon the professional spoils of this rich and powerful Commonwealth, is he now enjoying the luxury of retirement and comforting himself—“soul, thou hast much good I laid up for many years—take thine ease?”

Again, let me ask, where—after thirty years of arduous toil, bearing the burden and heat of the day,—where reclines the hoary head of my learned and laborious predecessor? His silvery locks, do they wave beneath the gilded canopy, the fruits of professional endurance? Whose roof covers his venerable head? O ye farmers and mechanics of Oxford, “who run every one into your ceiled houses,” tell me, whose?

You see then, my friends, yes you *feel*, that the opinion, that Professors of Colleges are a kind of idle aristocracy, who grow rich upon the public bounty, is a mere figment of imagination.

Let us next with candor and caution approach the other opinion that College learning is no advantage to the great body of the people. And in the examination of it, you yourselves shall be both judge and jury: all I shall do will be to present the evidence, you shall record the verdict.

Gentlemen of the Board, with your permission I proceed to discuss *the bearings of College Education upon the welfare of the whole community.*” This is the point to which the popular opinion we combat leads us. From the discussion we may claim the privilege of deducing some inferences, general and special.

What conceivable advantage is derived to the farmer, the mechanic, the laborer, who never enter a College, from College learning?

We answer much every way: and, to begin with the lowest class of pleasures, we ask, Does the laborer eat nothing, does he drink nothing, does he wear nothing, which he could neither eat drink nor wear but for and by means of the learning which Colleges promote? Who so poor, that he never lays the empire of China under contributions, to minister to his pleasures? Who drinks no tea? Who never dresses his food with spices from the east? What lady wears no crapes, no ribbons, no plain silks, no gorgeous satins, no any thing, the growth, produce and manufacture of some foreign land? The grapes of Asia, are they not often upon our tables? The dyes of Africa, who in this assembly does not glitter in them? Whose head has not been benefitted by the protection of the palm leaf? And what is this that agitates to freshness, the air around me?

Now let me ask you, would you enjoy these foreign articles, many of which you deem almost necessary of life, but for the learning of Colleges? Can the wide ocean be navigated without College learning? As well might you ride upon a sky rocket to the moon. Be it that Professors of Mathematics never saw the ocean—never stood on the deck of a ship; yet without their assistance, the ship cannot be built; nor rigged; nor navigated after she is built. Is it not evident then, to a demonstration, that for the seasoning of your soup and the handkerchief with which you wipe the sweat from your toil worn brow; you are indebted to the aid of College learning?

Look now to your internal commerce. Is it less the product of Science? Who has brought the Atlantic to your cabin doors and placed upon your every-day poplar tables the products of older countries; and decked your couches with the tapestry of the foreign or distant American loom? In other words, who taught to hew down the mountains, to fill up the valley, to span the mighty rivers with stupendous bridges, to compel the fiery and the watery elements, to transport the world's productions to your feet? Is not this the work of men who obtained their knowledge of science in College halls?

Is defence against foreign aggression and internal commotion any advantage to the great majority? If you answer affirmatively—if you admit that a well built navy and skilfully constructed batteries for the defence of our principal sea-ports, conduce to pub-

lic safety and to public happiness, then I ask, whence the science which these structures embody? Can a man, ignorant of mathematics and natural philosophy, build a battery, floating or fixed? Could he, even after all are constructed according to the rules of science bring a single gun to its proper angle that the ball may strike its mark? Thus the entire defences of the nation are based upon the calculations of science. College learning is indispensable to national safety and to national glory. It is the science of Oxford, and Cambridge, of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, that carries Britain's thunder in triumph round the globe. 'Twas the science of old Harvard and Yale and Columbia and Princeton that enabled the young American thunder to arouse old Neptune from the deep chambers of his ocean empire and to produce the momentary hesitation, whether he should prefer the mother or the daughter to share his imperial throne.

Let me not be told, this is all very fine; but after all, it is the bone and muscle and iron nerve of the rank and file, that gains the victory in the hour of conflict. I know, nerve and bone and muscle are indispensable. But what are bone and muscle in the face of scientific power? How much bone and muscle, unaided by science, would be requisite to storm a battery of a hundred Paxhan guns? How much unaided nerve would be required to board *Fulton the First*? Oh no; war is no longer a trial of mere brute force and animal courage, as in the days of barbarism: and terrible as it still is, it is not the same ferocious, death-dealing game.—The mastership of the ocean could never have been acquired by the bone and muscle of Britain and her daughter. Had not the learning of their schools made war a science, all their bone and muscle, combined with their literature, could never have made Anglo-Saxon the mother tongue in old ocean's empire.

Another class of witnesses for the truth of my position will start into life before you, upon a simple raising of the inquiry, who fought your great battles by land and sea? Who gained your glorious victories? We cannot enter upon detail; but if the questions be fully answered, we have no doubt, you will find, that they were either graduates of Colleges; or men who had attained through such, that higher education which it is their object to communicate. Has College learning then no happy bearing upon the welfare of the whole community?

Again; flesh is heir to many ills. Few men pass through life unaffected by bodily disease. Of course, the vast majority have occasion to seek relief from physical malady, at the hand of the physician. This class of men have existed in all the world and in all classes of society. If medical men are a tax and a burden to the public, College learning cannot be saddled with the censure. The most savage nations have their physicians. The universality of the fact proves it to be the judgment of the whole race, that the common good requires such a class of laborers. But now it is perfectly plain, that a knowledge of man's constitution must be highly beneficial to him who would mend it. Vast are the tortures inflicted by ignorance upon innocence. From our spruce quack doctor down to the Caffre medicine man, it is a system,—rather a confused jumble of tormenting agencies. We ask then, is it no benefit to the community at large to be rescued from the torture and destruction of life caused by the thousand forms of quackery? Verily, if scientific physicians acted wholly as negative quantities—if they merely prevented quackery, many a man is saved from dying forty deaths and very many valuable lives are spared to the community. Is this no benefit?

But medical science does not stop here. Who can estimate the positive advantages of the profession? How many lives are prolonged? How much positive enjoyment is poured into man's cup, which, but for the physician, must have continued to run over with misery?

In view of these things, need I ask whether scientific physicians can exist without the learning of Colleges? The question does not involve the assertion, that a full course of classical, scientific and philosophical studies is utterly indispensable. If it be admitted—as we suppose—(for we will not insult the good sense of our audience, by a contrary supposition)—that some College learning is useful, if not indispensable, it will follow, that the more thoroughly, the mind is disciplined and furnished with knowledge, the better will it be prepared to study and to understand the particular subjects of its profession. Accordingly, such is the practical judgment of the whole human race. For always and all the world over, quacks have flitted off before the face of regularly educated, scientific physicians; just as savages and rattlesnakes pass away before the face of civilized man. We have very full and instruc-

tive illustrations of this, in the cases of our numerous missionary physicians. Whenever these men come into competition with the unscientific native physicians, these are obliged to give place.—The heathen, whether savage, as in Africa, or civilized as in China and Hindoostan, soon learn the difference and declare their preference. Oh, that it were so always, in our civilized state of Ohio!

With these evidences we leave this part of the cause for your award, and following the Socratic method, the next question we meet relates to the sublime system of love and of government, which spreads its protecting wing, like some guardian angel, equally over the palace and the cottage; which defends the dweller in the White House, no more than the tenant in the log cabin. Glorious fabric! there it stands, the bulwark of man's defence. Into its sanctuary flee for protection, the poor and the rich; the man of science and the humblest laborer. Here all are safe. Here all rights are protected, all persons are sacred. Second only to the revealed system of gospel grace, this sublime structure is all-important to the welfare and happiness of all classes and orders of men. Who erected it? Had College learning any thing to do with it? Rather, had it not every thing? Whether you regard the common law as we derived it from our ancestors; or as we modified and applied its eternal principles in our political fabrics, who laid a stone in the structure, that did not derive his qualifications for this work, from the learning of the Colleges? Be it, that many men were useful laborers about the building, who never graduated; still, they had acquired their science and their language. But who reared its immoveable corners? Who turned its noble arches? Who erected its imperishable columns? Who turned its capacious dome? Let History give the response. How readest thou? Where got she this bright scroll? Her confession must be, for she is honest and truthful, 'I copied them chiefly from the old matriculation books of the Colleges.' Well then, if law and government are a blessing to mankind, discard, I pray you the opinion that College learning does no good to the great majority.

Once more on this tack. Who are they that, leaving behind them mere animal joys, national protection and glory, the happiness of bodily health and energy; yea the bulwarks of civil law and government, ascend to that higher field of intellectual pursuit,

where morality borrows from religion the sanctity and the power, which give efficacy to law and energy to government? Who are they that, rising above time and chance, bring down the motives of eternity to fix the soul's purpose in the ways of well doing; and thus settle forever the glorious fabric of law and of government upon the basis of an incorruptable virtue? Have an educated ministry nothing to do with the happiness of the great mass? Take away the hopes of eternity and what is there valuable in the consolations of time? Put out the lights of Christianity and what have you left to ennoble and to bless the human race?

Here again, we are agreed. Well then, take away a learned ministry, and where is christianity? Take away a learned ministry and where are the records of christianity? Had there never been a learned ministry, could the Bible ever have come down to us? And if it could, could it have been read? Would it now be an open volume to the whole people, but for the learned *protestant* ministry? Is it not the literature of the College, that spreads the records of heaven before the understandings of earth? Extinguish then the lights of classical literature, and you close the Bible. Shut up the College and you close the church, No wonder then, that christianity has always been the patron of Literature and Science. No wonder, that she takes both upon her shoulders and bears them onward in triumph. Shorn of these bright locks, well does she know, her strength is absorbed in the might of her God; but beautified with these, she feels that again she can bear off the Gates of Gaza and pull down the temple of Dagon. If then the religion of the cross is any benefit to the great majority, who can fully estimate the blessings flowing to them through the learning of the College?

Let me now invite your attention to a subject, apparently far off from the preceding—the principle of division of labor, which has produced such wonderful effects on the production of wealth. It belongs to practical mechanics as involved in political economy.—All men know and practice it in some degree. One Indian hunts, another traps, and the squaw cultivates the corn. Civilization divides much more minutely. One person has often but a single operation to perform, that can be learned in a comparatively short time and the constant repetition of which produces an amazing rapidity. It also saves much expense in fools; for where a

business is divided in twelve branches, the implements with which only one man operated before the division, now accommodate twelve, and to much greater advantage. This may possibly be looked upon as a discovery of accident. We humbly suggest, it is a deduction of science. More correctly, it is scientific analysis embodied in practical art. It is the same mental process which the boy performs in the grammar school, when he analyses a Latin sentence into its several parts and points out their relations; that discovers the laws of the language. In both cases the process is analytical. The subject in one, is an action, or variety of actions, embodied in language as the vehicle or instrument of suggesting them to the mind: in the other, the action or series of actions, is seen or suggested to the mind by the motions of the actor and his instruments. Let a familiar example illustrate my meaning. "The brick-maker mixes clay and water to the consistency of stiff mortar, presses it into a mould with an iron trowel; dries it in the sun and burns it in a kiln." Now, when a boy parses this sentence, he analyses the whole complex process, as completely as the man does, who appoints one operator to temper the mortar, another to wheel it, another to mould, another to bear away, and another to set and burn it. The mental activities of the two are just alike; and thus we see that scientific analytical operations are exactly analagous to division of mechanical operations. This opens up to us the philosophy of the fact, that division of labor bespeaks an advanced state of society. It is never found to any great extent in any country where analysis and classification have not been considerably cultivated. But now the whole life of a student is taken up with these operations, from the grammar school to the higher metaphysics; from the simple rules of arithmetic, to the sublime demonstrations of astronomical science. Hence, the influence which the analytical processes of the scholar must have upon the mechanical movements of a community, must be great; but can never be calculated.

But there is another form, in which the higher learning of a country bears upon production of wealth; I mean the application of natural agents instead of muscular power, to the operations of mechanism. It is the province of the schools to develop the laws of nature and the laws of language, without which a knowledge of nature could not be communicated. It is equally the province of

the schools, through their proper product, learned men, to direct the application of these laws to mechanical uses, bearing upon the increased production of wealth and the diminished proportion of physical labour. Thus it is, that science releases human muscle from painful toil and compels nature to work for man.

Nor are the benefits of this process confined to the agencies of production which directly involve mechanical principle and division of labour. How much toil is saved to the farmer by the mill and thrashing-machine we may not stop to enquire. Let him ask himself, how Tecumseh's grandfather thrashed his wheat and cloverseed and ground his corn. But who can estimate the more direct influence of scientific principles upon agricultural products? If an American farmer wishes to know how much he is indebted to science, let him consult the annals of the Philadelphia Agricultural Society. A few scientific men there, at the head of whom may perhaps be placed the late Judge Peters and Dr. Mease, have more than doubled the products of Pennsylvania & the other grain growing parts of the Union. Let him look into the agricultural statistics of Scotland, and he will see reason to believe, that the scientific experiments of Sir John St. Clair have trippled her productions. Almost equally powerful for good to the whole nation and the world, are the influences which proceed from the Laboratory of Sir Humphrey Davy. Thousands and millions enjoy the benefits of his researches, who never heard his name and know not his nation. Thus from the high places of science, as light from the fountain of day, knowledge pours all abroad over the earth and the world of mankind bask in the blessedness of its beams.

Let us now glance at the law of its operation mark its results. There is a two-fold proportion, not accurately appreciable, yet known to be great, between scientific power including the principle of the division of labour, and physical or muscular labour, and the products of their combined action. The more science—or, we may say, the more intellect is concentrated on a given production, the investment of capital and the expenditure of muscular strength remaining the same, the greater the amount produced:—Consequently there is a relative diminution of labour. But let the *increased* production be thrown back as capital, the labour still continuing the same, and you realize a new increment of produc-

tion, both absolute and relatively to labour—that is, the necessity for labour, is diminished in an increased ratio. But again, let the increased production be as before, thrown back as capital, and at the same time, let a large accession of intellect be also brought to bear, the labour remaining the same, and you have a twofold increase of production. That is, you have something like a geometrical ratio, on a descending scale, whereby to diminish the painful toils of the body substituting in its place the pleasurable exercises of the mind. That is, you have a general law, that intellectual labour and physical labour stand in inverse proportion. As the one increases the other diminishes; the mind is working out the redemption of the body from painful toil. Is this no benefit to the labourer?

But now, if this process moves onward, it is evident, that the amount of labour from which man so generally shrinks, must become indefinitely small: and relatively, the amount of wealth must become indefinitely large: and hence all the evils of overgrown riches will fall upon us. The means of subsistence, of comfort, of luxury will be so abundant, that the markets will be overstocked, business will stagnate, operatives be thrown out of employment, capital will lie idle and its owners be ruined. In short, *over production, that monstrum horrendum* of practical economy, will stalk abroad over the land, devouring his thousands at a meal.

Before we meet this wild creature in deathful contact, let us accord to him all his just advantages—let him assume his most terrific forms—let him gnash upon us with his teeth, long as a Norwegian pine and horrific as an Ohio honey locust.

It is not to be concealed, that we, Americans; and especially we dwellers in the Great Valley, are surrounded with peculiar dangers. Let us look them in the face.

We are in danger from the cheapness and exuberance of our soil. A simple labourer can procure as much wages in two days as will buy him an acre of wild land; which land, if properly instructed, he would expend on it the requisite skill and labour, would yield forty bushels of wheat every third year and one hundred and twenty-five bushels of corn every second year. That is, less than one third of his time devoted to labour, will afford the means of

subsistence. Now it is easy to see the tendencies of this physical condition. If there be nothing to stimulate the laborer to aim at more than bare subsistence, two thirds of his time lies unemployed. But in the present actual state of man, is it possible that so much idleness and so strong a native bias to evil should not gender vice?

But again, vice necessarily produces effeminacy both of mind and body; and when combined with physical inactivity must reach that result by a most rapid progress. The physical tendencies, in the very position we occupy, are therefore downward. The human race always degenerates in large and excessively fertile valleys. Physical degeneracy is both effect and cause, to intellectual and moral degeneracy; and all go downward toward political bondage. It is difficult for freedom long to dwell in luxurious plains. Such is the voice of history. Look at the valley of the Nile.—See how all the living monuments of her glory fade away before the mountain nourished legions of Cyrus, led on even by his degenerate son. Look upon the vast valley of Euphrates.—Mark how its millions of men and of wealth, prostrate themselves before the feet of men hardened to toil amid the mountain craggs of Macedonia and Thessaly. The same is true also of the invasion of Tamerlane and Ghengis Kahn. Such is the course of human nature—the luxuries of Capua conquered the army that had conquered the Alps.

But another consideration must come in here, if we will look danger in the face. Our government is a republic. Intelligence and virtue must be the base of our pyramid, if it shall outlive the monuments of Egypt's power and the witnesses of her degeneracy. Take away the foundation and how long can the pyramid stand? To a demonstration it is evident, that our governments are much more liable than monarchies to revolution and overthrow, from the physical causes, which lead to degeneracy; and that the result of such overthrow must be despotism. An ignorant and immoral people cannot possibly be governed on the principle of the free element, as we now exercise it. If therefore the physical causes which have led to the upturning of luxurious monarchies, by producing degeneracy & effeminacy among the people, are now at work among us, with the same unwavering and necessary tendency, how

much more speedily must they reach the dreaded crisis? How great therefore must be our peril, when these special sources of danger, are superadded to those which have been too strong for all the institutions of all the great valleys?

Let us now call up the monster evil of *over production*. We have seen that the extensive development of intellectual power and its direction upon physical agents, must inevitably lead toward indefinitely great results in the shape of riches, capital and wealth in all possible forms—that as mind triumphs over matter, man is freed from bodily toil—that idleness, and luxury gender vice; and thus, there is a turning of the tide backward; and thus there seems to be a maximum of wealth, and virtue and intelligence beyond which man cannot pass; but when a nation has neared this point, it must revert again to barbarism.

Is such the doom of man and of nations? Is human industry and economy a monster that devours itself? Do learning, and the arts it generates, lead round to barbarity and ignorance? If piety direct intelligence and intelligence subdue nature and compel her to work for man; and nature thus working, pours forth her exhaustless stores, must the effect of these stores necessarily be to corrupt the heart, to brutalize the understanding and force man back to the bondage of mere physical labor?

These things cannot be. Opposite causes cannot produce the same effects. And yet the tendencies of over production are to distress; and of overgrown wealth to luxury, vice and degeneracy. This cannot be denied: but is there no counteracting principle? Can no prophylactic remedy be discovered against this disease in the social body?

Let us examine a few of the nostrums that have been proposed: and first, *agrarianism* steps forward with its charming scheme of liberty and equality. All men are born free and equal, therefore each man must have an equal share of lands, houses, stock, goods and money. Now all is right for once. There are no poor—no rich—no servants—no masters—no ignorant—no learned. This is delightful! What a happy band of brother's, bound together by the indissoluble bonds of liberty and equality. Now we start all fair and equal on this glorious 4th day of July. But how is it on this 10th day of Aug? One has spent his money for luxuries, an-

other has bought more land with his, a third has pawned his sythe for rum, a fourth has used his and earned the price of ten, a fifth, has run through all and is in jail. Where now is agrarian equality? Would an equal distribution of land and goods *monthly*, sustain such equality? Would society gain—would the sum of human happiness be increased, by thus abrogating the law of heaven, which is, that every man has a right to the product of his own industry and that society is bound to sustain him in it? Let this right be withdrawn and what else is left?

An improved form of the agrarian nostrum is the confining of this equal distribution to the time of each man's death. Then the government is to step in as the residuary legatee, to take possession of all his goods and chattels, and to distribute them equally to all the citizens. Thus the irregularities of wealth would be interrupted. No man could leave his children rich and thus endanger their morals; whilst they would come in for the eighteen millionth portion of their father's hard earned property. What a splendid scheme is here! How glorious the achievements of science!—What fine chances for philosophical agrarians, who are too proud to beg and too lazy to work, to enrich themselves in settling up these estates? For no doubt, as the plan is the production of their brain, they, above all men, would be chosen to conduct this leveling operation! And then, only think of the crucifixion of all those absurd feelings which lead a man to cherish, protect and care for one child above another, merely because he happens to be the parent of it! This splendid scheme would soon abolish all this partiality and compel all men to love and care for all men alike. And then to think of the noble, capacious philanthropy, and the mighty stimulus it would give to labour and of course to the production of wealth. when a man reflects that he is laboring, not for the pitiful, little object of one or two children; but for all the children of the nation alike! Oh, how this magnificent idea must swell his heart and nerve his arm!! And then again, his widow.—'Tis not love for her who may survive him, that stirs up his soul and sends him early to toil and brings him late from the field or the shop. Oh no. That is a small affair. On the contrary his object is vast—he toils for three millions of widows, who, of course, will all bless his memory for dying and weep that industrious and rich men do not die faster!

Such is the contemptible philosophy of infidel agrarianism. It is not however to be denied, that it contains a perfect remedy for the evils of overgrown wealth. Of course, if a man cannot render happy with his wealth, those whom he most loves, he will not be likely to lay up for others. The direct tendency is to savage barbarity, to which it would lead in a quarter of a century.

Another philosophical nostrum is revolution. All revolutions, we are told, are a good. All leave the world better than they found it. They all belong to the advancing, onward progress of society. When the evils of overproduction overtake a nation, the true remedy is a revolution. Something is wrong in the government. If we ask What? Oh, we don't know: but something must be wrong, or such a talented, high-minded man as I am; so profound a philosopher would be reasonably rich and highly respected and honored. There is a radical defect in our legislation. It is in the warp and woof of the system and nothing can cure it, but to revolutionize. It must be treated, as the paper-maker treats old rags—all ground up, with this difference that it must be washed clean in the blood of revolution, and worked over again. If it can be purified without this wash, well; but if not, well: Let us have a change; a revolution that shall stick the apex of the cone in the mud and its base in the air! How long will it stand there?

Such is the Gallico Germanico atheistico-infidelity, which is pushing itself into public notice. All revolutions leave the world better off! Aye, the revolution which extinguished the liberties of Greece and enthroned the despot Alexander, was a great benefit! The revolution which dismembered and extinguished Poland, was a great blessing to mankind! The revolution which destroys one government and produces a worse, is a mighty improvement; because forsooth, if the people are more ground down and oppressed after the revolution, they will the sooner be persuaded to revolutionize again!

This philosophy is based obviously on the maxim, "whatever is, is right." With this, as a *postulatum concessum*, it is easy to prove that every revolution is *right* at cast, if not *good*. Poland is abolished as a nation, therefore it is right. Tyranny is triumphant over human liberty, therefore it is right. Millions of men are in a state of domestic as well as civil slavery; therefore it is

right. The assassin's dagger quivers in the heart of his victim, therefore it is right. The spirit of all evil works in the heart of the unbelieving philosopher, therefore he is rightfully in possession of his own home.

The extent to which this vile philosophy pervades our country it is impossible to say. There is however some reason to apprehend, that an invisible aristocracy is about being created, under oaths of secrecy for its extensive dissemination. However this be, certain it is, a little of it is thrown out here and a little there, to try the public taste, and no doubt if the public are willing to bear it, we shall have a pretty full development of the scheme shortly. Cataline would soon have revealed his own secrets, if Cicero and the Roman people had manifested no unwillingness toward that revolution---that good thing, at which he aimed.

But the question reverts, is there no real remedy!--no prophylactic?

Preparatory to a response, let me remark, that there is no corrupting principle in riches. Wealth, increased to any conceivable amount never can originate moral evil. The only man who ever was lord of the whole earth, was the only mere man of perfect holiness that ever trod upon it. We cannot believe the Manichean figment that evil is inherent in matter; and it could not of course be deduced from it. Money, goods, wealth, are not the root of all evil, but the love of the m is. From this it follows that overproduction, of itself, is not an evil---rather it is a misnomer. There cannot be too much wealth, if only men were wise and good enough to use it rightly.

Again, the leisure---bodily leisure, which is afforded, or rendered possible and necessary, by the increased production secured by scientific power, is not in itself an evil. Nor has it any necessary connection with moral evil. Such was Adam's leisure in a state of innocence. On the contrary, painful toil is an evil; and it cannot be necessary to perpetuate it in a system of moral government. But we have seen the tendency of scientific labor, to annihilate it. Consequently, the increased productiveness of human industry enlightened and directed by science, is not to be charged with the evils which apparently follow and often accompany it.

A farther corollary from these propositions, is, that the desired remedy is not to be sought in the destruction of wealth, or in its non-production by rejecting the aids of science and the division of labor. The contradictory of this last is true. It is the absence of a full and proper scientific division of labor that occasions the evils of over production; that is, that affords the opportunity for the vicious passions that are in man, to work themselves out in idleness, riot, dissipation and revolution.

Two elements then combine in the true remedy for all these ills---intelligence and that higher morality, called religion. Let such division of

labor be introduced as will call forth the intellectual faculties into perpetual exercise, and as will create right affections in the mind and keep them in perpetual play; and all will be well.

As to the former element, it is plain, if you diminish the hours of his physical labor and yet do not furnish him with intellectual employment, you expose the laborer to danger: but bring down the one only as you elevate the other, and you cultivate the whole man, whilst you enfeeble no particular part.

But some man will say, I should like to know how the intellectual exercises of a starving father will feed a starving family. We are not bound to shew it: it is not our doctrine. Yet we may affirm, his intelligence will not make the pains of hunger more intense. But what we do say is, that intellectual elevation will tend greatly to *prevent* the irregularities which produce distress from scarcity here; and at the same time from redundancy there. Manufactures, trade, agriculture have their laws, just as certain in their operation as those of the planetary world: can a knowledge of these be useless even to the operative in the factory? Would they not enable him to anticipate irregularities and guard against their accompanying evils? We repeat it. It is not *overproduction*, but *irregularity* that spreads havoc over the land. The engine is not too powerful in itself; but its powers are not balanced; its builder did not understand the composition of forces and the division of labor. Let him combine with it, the governing influence of a high intelligence, and apply the oil of christian love, and it will raise earth to heaven. On the contrary, remove the regulating influence of a supreme intelligence from the machinery of the universe---let the balance of its powers be lost, and the planetary world is a wreck, rolling ruin through the wide creation.

But we have not affirmed that intelligence *alone* can prevent the downward tendencies of depraved humanity, under the exuberant bounties of the Creator. But let that higher morality, which draws its motives for the government of mind, from the Supreme mind itself,---let this captivate the heart and lead it away in the silken, but indissoluble chains of a heaven descended charity, and your guardianship is complete. We do not say however, that even this will produce an agrarian heaven upon earth---a physical equality of either character, capacity or condition. For we remember who hath said, "the poor ye have always with you;" and sound philosophy teaches that this is necessary. Because the true spirit of charity cannot display and perfect itself, but, in a world of poor and rich. What we do say is, that inequalities of condition will be very nearly balanced by equalities of misery and of happiness; of joy and of sorrow, in the various departments of society.

What now do you say, Fellow Citizens, to this heaven born and earth cheering panacea?---We believe you are right. Religion, virtue and in,

telligence are a safer remedy, than Agrarianism, Brownsonism and blood. I knew you would say so, after examination of the evidence.---Yes, but we should like to see how you are to secure and apply your panacea---have you not forgotten your Colleges? By no means. "If I forget thee, let my right hand forget her cunning." I speak in the singular; because if every man dearly loves one College, and that his own, all Colleges will be dearly beloved; just as, if every man loves one wife, all wives will be dearly beloved---unless indeed, some should generalize too much and love all but their own.

No; I have not forgotten my subject. It is in my eye and in my heart. Do you not see that for the dissemination of light, Colleges are erected? Have you discovered in them any disposition to monopolize learning, intelligence, virtue, religion? Or do they not bend all their energies towards spreading these all over the land? If therefore the points be secured, toward which Colleges bend their force, it is plain, the bulwarks of defence abide impregnable. If intelligence and virtue, wisdom and religion pervade the whole land, must not the happiness of the whole people be highly promoted?

Let me again call you to a bit of philosophy. Look at the adaptation of physical nature to intellectual and moral nature. And, to shorten time and guard against losing truth in an abstraction, take it in the concrete---Look at Miami University. There she stands, as the pyramid of Cheops stood upon the once exuberant alluvion of far famed Nile.---once exuberant, now a howling desert of sand, gradually rolling in and burying the vast pile. When the pyramid shall have been wholly engulfed, where shall Miami University be? Shall this vast alluvion plain become a sandy desert? Shall the curses of heaven make this great valley like Egypt, "the basest of kingdoms?" This people shall answer it.---You, Gentlemen of the Board, and we of the Faculty, must meet the responsibilities involved in this interrogation.

Let us look at our resources, not in the spirit of silly boast; but in the soberness of sound sense; and remembering to whom our account shall be rendered. Let me say then, with an eye limited to Miami Valley, that the God of nature has given us an alluvion soil, like that of Nilus, perfectly inexhaustable and capable of indefinite improvement and unlimited productiveness. From a small portion of it He has given us a specific revenue, permanent as the soil and sure as the government of our country. Now, let the College pour down the light of its science and the heat of its piety and virtue upon this soil, and what a vast production must be the result? Let science shew how to work up this vast production in the arts and increase its value ten fold: and what immense wealth we have! Let these flow in upon their source---Let the thousand noble mind youth, who can thus be spared from the labors of agriculture

and the arts, revert to these halls and scale the heights of science to higher points of elevation than any of their predecessors. Let these again go forth, armed with a vast increase of power to exert it in lifting up the whole body of the people in the scale of wealth, intelligence, virtue and religion; and where will this thing end? Who will dare, when he departs home, to say, my name is inscribed on yonder summit, none will ever rise to a higher elevation! Is there any limit to the accumulation of intellectual products!--any *ne plus ultra* in the world of intellect and morals?

What then is our policy and duty? *Raise the standard high;---HIGHER YET:---STILL HIGHER:* If you want the noblest youths of the land to rally round your College, this is your true policy. Make them believe the truth; not that the top of your pyramid is lost in the clouds; but that it towers to heaven and yet it may be reached.

This is also our duty. We owe it to our State and to our country. We owe to our country's Great Benefactor. God and Washington have committed to us these ten talents; and woe be to us if we bury them in the earth---if we invert the pyramid and send the youth of the land downward to seek its glorious summit, in the grossness of a base materialist utilitarianism.

Let us turn an adder's ear to the syren song of temporary expediency. Let us not listen to the whinings of sectarian jealousy. Let us not measure the monument of our faithfulness and the bulwark of our country's defense, with the pursestrings of the avaricious or the stringless purses of the indigent. Let us not cut down our mountain to the mole-hill dimension which some may have prescribed to professional qualifications. Let us not go into the market with our roll of parchments and enter into an inglorious competition from the lowest bidder.

We have defined our position: If any man, casting his eye over the broad ocean, ask, where is Miami University---the old ship? We say, there she is,---where she ought be, on the billow's brow and not in the trough of the sea. All hands aboard, all sails set; her banner in the breeze; her armament complete---her men ready. Let the grand admiral assign to her, her place in the crescent line, which is to bear down upon her country's foes---the batteries of ignorance and vice.---Let him place her on the right, or in the glorious centre; in the name of her present officers and crew, my honor for it, she will not be the first to fire a lee gun and haul down her standard; nor the last to call for the boarding pikes.

Such, Gentlemen of the Board, is the understanding on these planks. Such the views and feelings of the present shipment.

Such, YOUNG GENTLEMEN, of the first mess, we well know to be your views and feelings. You now leave us to carry them out, we fondly

hope and trust, through long and laborious and respectable and happy professional lives. Your predecessors will not be offended, if we say to them, 'quicken your pace Gentlemen, or you will be overtaken to your disadvantage. These brethren of yours are not a year behind you. We should be sorry to hear you say to them, "*Go ahead*---rather let ~~it~~ be "*come on*."

We express the same to the present class. The next must and will write their names above your present mark: and if you fail to carry out the *esprit du corps*, the tall sophomores will soon overtop you both.

And now, my dear young Friends, time has brought us to the sundering point. When, and where and how, we shall meet again, is known only to Him who sees the end from the beginning. The changes of this world appear to us, who see so small a portion of the Creator's universal plan, utter confusion: as do the movements of the planetary orbs to the illiterate; but to Omniscience all is order, harmony, beauty.

A retrospective glance upon your own history, as a Class, may illustrate the fluctuations of human condition. This Class was organized four years ago and consisted of twenty-two members; of whom five only stand here to day. Accessions meanwhile were received, swelling the whole number to fifty-one, of whom scarcely one third remain to receive the usual testimonials of scholarship. Of the other thirty-four, some have entered professional life, by the side door; some have been thrown back by various uncontrollable circumstances, but are still pressing onward for the prize. Some have abandoned literary pursuits altogether; some perhaps are dead. Such is human life! How unstable! How confused and apparently anomalous! Such as it is, you must meet it. Look forward, then, to the vast field before you. Look beyond, to the rewards of faithful devotion to the cause of truth. Look upward to the star of Bethlehem, so often pointed out to you from these high places, and the sun of Righteousness will be a light to your feet.

Short, but most happy has been the period of my intercourse with you: should we all prove faithful to ourselves and our friends, our country and our God, we shall shortly meet in that bright world, where language is all living, science all light, happiness unspeakable and eternal. Amen! So let it be.